

De Maiziere sets eyes on premiership

EAST BERLIN (AP) — Lothar de Maiziere, leader of the Conservative Party that won the most seats in the East German elections, said Friday he was ready to become the country's first non-communist premier. De Maiziere's party won overwhelmingly with backing from West Germany's governing conservatives, despite allegations that he collaborated with the Stasi, the East German secret police. De Maiziere has denied the allegations. Earlier, East Germany's chief prosecutor rejected a church proposal that all new parliament members be investigated immediately for past links with the secret police. Dieter Pohl, spokesman for Chief Prosecutor Hans-Joergen Joseph, said such a probe would be illegal before the new parliament is sworn in. Church officials had urged the probe amid mounting concern that many of the lawmakers had links to the Stasi. During 40 years of rule, the Communists used the Stasi to control all walks of life, and many people were intimidated into collaborating.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورдан تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة صادرة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية (الرأي)

Volume 15 Number 4343

AMMAN SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1990, SHA'BAN 27, 1410

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Arafat praises American stand on settlements

No suspects named, no travel bans imposed **9 corruption cases go to prosecutors**

By Salameh Ne'matt
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Six prosecutors began investigations today into suspected cases of corruption passed on to the prosecutor general by the Lower House of Parliament, informed sources said Friday.

The sources said the six prosecutors would study the cases before deciding whether witnesses need to be called or additional information sought prior to cases being referred to court for legal action.

Meanwhile, official sources denied Friday that 27 people were named as suspects in corruption cases or that the prosecutor general asked several suspects not to leave the country.

The sources told the Jordan Times that Prime Minister Mudar Badran, when asked by members of the Finance Committee of the House to issue orders banning suspects from leaving the country, said such an order can only be taken by the judiciary based on legal grounds reached through the due process of the law.

Speaking during the closed session Tuesday, Badran explained that the prime minister could no more issue such orders at a time

when martial law provisions are frozen.

The prime minister announced the freezing of martial laws in January and promised to abolish them altogether within four to six months. He also withdrew martial law jurisdiction over nearly 50 per cent of violations so as to allow regular courts to take over.

The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that when asked during the session, the committee declined to offer names of individuals it believes are involved in corruption cases.

Badran repeatedly said over the last few weeks that his government was prepared to refer all cases of financial and administrative corruption to relevant courts provided sufficient information was available to justify the decision.

Justice Minister Yousef Mbeideh chaired a meeting Thursday attended by criminal court chief Hosni Jayyousi, Prosecutor General Mohammad Smadi and heads of investigation councils.

During the meeting, the cases referred from the Lower House were distributed among the six prosecutors.

The sources said that the case involving the sale of one-third of the Central Bank's gold reserves

was assigned to Ibrahim Abu Taleb. The Jbeila amusement park case was assigned to Sami Khader, the wheat and barley case to Khalaf Raqqad and both the Abu Nuseir housing project and the Swaqa prison cases to Mohammed Kraishan.

The sources added that the investigation councils will also look into cases involving the purchase of animal feed and a case referred to the prosecutor general by the Ministry of Health. They said a committee was formed comprising representatives of the Audit Bureau, the General Apparatus Department and the Ministry of Health to investigate the case.

Officials, observers and deputies said the nine cases referred to the prosecutor general could lead to the investigation of several former and present government officials, businessmen and at least four deputies in the Lower House.

According to an official source, who spoke to the Jordan Times, deputies Thouran Hindawi, Hussein Mjalli and Salim Zoubi demanded during the closed session that the investigation should cover projects going as far back as 1975. He said the demand was not put to vote.

House committee probes leak of closed session's deliberations

By Salameh Ne'matt
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As the Kingdom's judiciary launches its probe into nine suspected cases of corruption passed on to the prosecutor general by the Lower House of Parliament, a House panel began investigations into parliamentary sources who leaked information to the press about last Tuesday's "secret" session.

In a stormy session Thursday, the House appointed an eleven-member committee to investigate the leak to the Jordan Times and Al Ra'i which was seen by many as a breach of a consensus established by a majority vote over keeping secret the House's deliberations on the Finance Committee's report on corruption.

Speaker Sulaiman Arar announced that he had received a memo signed by 10 deputies asking the House to question one deputy who they said leaked information to the press.

Following the front-page reports in the Jordan Times and Al Ra'i Wednesday, Al Dustour and Sawi Al Shaabi followed suit Thursday and published more de-

tails of the "secret" session's deliberations.

Al Ra'i Editor-in-Chief Mahmud Al Kayed and Jordan Press Association President Hashem Khreisat were interviewed Thursday by the committee over the publication of the story.

Kayed said he refused to reveal his sources because "according to the law and the constitution, journalists have the right to protect their sources."

He added that "the profession's ethics forbid the editor in chief from revealing the newspaper's sources."

When asked about the affair, Khreisat said he was out of the country at the time and could not comment on the issue.

The investigation committee includes 11 deputies. However only five of them interviewed Kayed and Khreisat on Thursday. They were: Nayef Hadid, Mohammad Alawneh, Fouad Khalafat, Abdul Mum'in Abu Zant and Atef Al Boushi.

Parliamentary sources, officials and observers said the nine cases referred to the prosecutor general could lead to an investigation of several former

(Continued on page 3)

Journalists react sharply to deputies' attack on press

By Nermene Murad
and Saad Hattar

AMMAN — Jordanian journalists and the press reacted sharply Friday to charges by Lower House deputies that newspapers violated the parliament's code of secrecy when they published details of Tuesday's closed session.

In a session held Thursday, the Lower House adopted a resolution to appoint a panel to investigate "the leakage of the House's deliberations," after a number of deputies attacked Al Ra'i daily, which, apart from the English-language Jordan Times, was the first Arabic newspaper to publish the details (see story above).

Al Ra'i, in a commentary signed by its parliamentary editor Friday, said the House was still "rotating around itself in discussing the instinctive rules of the game of democracy."

"It looked yesterday as if some of the country's deputies wanted to become the chief editors of the Jordanian newspapers, deciding what should be published and what should not by claiming to know what is harmful and what is not," the commentary added.

Prominent Jordanian writers and columnists criticised the

House's inability to define the difference between its decision to conduct a secret session and the journalists' right and duty to reveal information to the public. They also blamed the House for the leakage of the information and defended the media from the responsibility of maintaining it.

If the House members decided they wanted to hold a secret session they should maintain that "secret and it is our duty to unveil it," Tareq Massarweh, leading political columnist at Al Ra'i, told the Jordan Times.

In its commentary, Al Ra'i said parliament members had been blamed for not recognising the "role of the press in publishing facts, in the democratic world, as well as its role in achieving justice, in the watergate scandal, which lead to the fall of an American president."

"The direct connection which distinguishes the press in its relationship with the people, enables it, in great democracies, to become the fourth estate in practice and not only in theory," the commentary added.

Only then could the press become the "real guarantee against the monopoly of one of the three branches of government over power which takes the shape of complete control of information... and sometimes right."

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King's talks in Paris, London 'very fruitful'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein's recent talks with the leaders of France and Britain were "highly successful" and the King was extremely satisfied with the position of the European Community (EC) on Soviet Jewish immigration to Palestine, an official source said Friday.

The King, who returned from his visits to the two countries Thursday, was "successful clarifying the Arab point of view towards the issue of Soviet immigration," the source told the Jordan Times.

The source said the King's talks in France and Britain had additional significance in light of the two countries' special relationship with the U.S.

The EC, in a statement issued earlier this month, warned Israel of the dangers setting Jews in the occupied territories but did not condemn the flow of immigrants to Israel proper.

According to the source, the King clarified to the French and British leaders that the Arabs were not against the emigration of Soviet Jews, but opposed their "forced immigration" to Israel and settlement in the occupied

lands.

The King explained that curbs imposed on immigration to countries other than Israel were seen by the Arab World as "forced immigration," the source said.

The King also pointed out that any settlement of occupied territories violated international laws, including the fourth Geneva convention related to the status of occupied lands and the occupier.

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Discord plagues income tax law

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Discussions of a controversial income tax law introduced by the government and amended by the Finance Committee of the Lower House of Parliament are to be resumed in a third session Monday following an inconclusive debate Thursday.

Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh, in a detailed report designed to convince the House to reject the committee's amendment widening income tax exemptions for roots, said the amendments would reduce official revenues by JD 22.6 million and have adverse effects on the economy.

The finance minister told the House that the proposed amendments raising exemptions from 10 to 30 per cent on rents for housing and 30 per cent for other purposes would primarily help high-income citizens, with a very limited benefit for low-income people.

Finance Committee Chairman Abdullah Ensour argued that the exemptions would boost investment in real estate and construction, the Kingdom's second largest sector after industry. He said that lower taxes on revenues from rents would also result in lower rents for low-income people.

Jardaneh disagreed saying that the best method to boost investments in construction is the expansion of housing projects which are leased to citizens in accordance with their financial capabilities.

On another proposal exempting profits on shares of banks and financial institutions and reducing taxes on investments in companies established after Jan. 1, 1990, Jardaneh said that this amendment would deprive the treasury of an important source of revenue, "making private sector investments at the expense of the income tax, contrary to international income tax laws."

The minister warned that the treasury's loss would be great because the amendment allows individuals with investment projects to execute the project through tax reductions as a private shareholding company, and then making deduct this investment from net profits that are subject to taxation.

He said raising university fee exemptions from JD 300 to JD 1,500 would benefit high-income citizens. He pointed out that there are 75,000 Jordanian students in local and foreign universities, including 5,000 in the United States and 2,000 in Western Europe.

On returning the scaled income tax on shareholding companies, Jardaneh said the government's amendment of the law was in line with international practices "which differentiates between corporate tax and tax on individuals which are collected according to incomes."

On the committee's proposal to abolish categorised exemptions on individuals whose income exceeds JD 10,000 a year, the minister said the original amendment did not affect low-income citizens and that abolishing this amendment "would only benefit those with income exceeding JD 10,000."

He explained that the government's amendments which put an income tax base and ceiling on personal income was designed to increase exemptions for low-income groups and to limit exemptions on high-income Jordanians.

On the other hand, Jardaneh said, the government had no objection to raising exemptions for public sector employees to JD 4,800 a year.

The minister said the government had decided that banks and financial institutions must pay a minimum of 35 per cent on their profits before distribution of dividends, so as to achieve an equitable distribution of the tax burden.

(Continued on page 5)

'Less politicised' bloc sweeps contractors association

By Marianne M. Shahn
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The "professional unity bloc" scored a landslide victory in elections held Friday for the executive committee of the powerful Jordanian Contractors Association, securing eight of the nine seats open for contest. Based on this majority victory, bloc candidate Awani Saket was elected president of the association.

Despite the similarity in platforms espoused by the two other competing blocs, the "credibility and personal creditworthiness" of the candidates fielded by the "professional unity bloc" were cited by voters and observers as the factor behind the bloc's astounding victory, though expected by many.

Association members seemed to have put their confidence in the list supported by outgoing President Ali Abu Ghareb. The only candidate to gain a seat in the committee was Nabil Shamai.

Observers noted that Abu Ghareb had been a very popular president and the only thing stopping him from seeking a third term for him was the association's law.

"Awani Saket is seen as another Ali Abu Ghareb," said a veteran founding member of the association. "He is believed to be a very good administrator and interested in the welfare of all contractors, particularly the little ones — traits that distinguished his predecessor." Abu Ghareb had been known to have been a powerful force in lobbying to increase the bargaining leverage of contractors, especially the smaller ones.

"This election relied solely on personalities and reputation of their companies," said an election organiser as voting was proceeding at the Jerusalem Hotel earlier in the day. "If the candidate is thought to be financially and contractually sound then he would have a better chance of winning the race than one who is known to be heavily in debt," he added.

Many voters cited "track records and credibility with the government" as essential qualities of the candidates they planned to vote for.

While most voters said that they would not adhere to any particular list the final results indicated that they had.

(Continued on page 3)

Infiltration bid foiled

AMMAN (J.T.) — Units of the Armed Forces foiled an attempt by a group of arms and drug smugglers to infiltrate into Jordan through the Klugman's northern border on Wednesday, an Armed Forces spokesman said Friday.

The spokesman, quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petar, said all of the would-be infiltrators fled after a shootout with Armed Forces units, leaving behind a number of Kalashnikov machineguns and ammunition and an unspecified quantity of hashish.

In voicing an opinion on the issue, Al Sharab columnist Musa Hawamdeh, underlined the right of the press to search for and publish information, noting that had the press "published the news of corruption when it was taking place it would have stopped many of the corrupt from continuing this practice."

He added that publishing the proceedings of the secret session at this time "would be a warning for those contemplating illegal acts from doing so."

Only then could the press become the "real guarantee against the monopoly of one of the three branches of government over power which takes the shape of complete control of information... and sometimes right."

(Continued on page 3)

Peres seeks to form minority government

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's Labour Party, struggling to form a government, is seeking short-term deals that could make its leader, Shimon Peres, prime minister even without a reliable majority in Israel's deadlocked parliament.

Political sources said Friday that Peres, who hopes to lead Israel to first-ever peace talks with Palestinians, wanted to present a government to parliament by Wednesday, the last session before a scheduled seven-week recess.

They said Labour was vigorously trying to gain the backing of one or a few legislators — including members of the rightist Likud party of caretaker Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

"Labour is not actually insisting that they come over to the Labour Party — that would be absurd even for Israeli politics. They must want them to abstain in the vote," one source quoted by Reuters said.

Labour officials did not rule out a minority government. If Peres could squeak through an endorsement vote before the re-

Gaza girl killed by army jeep

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Soldiers opened fire on Palestinians to quell a protest in a refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip Friday that was sparked when an army jeep ran over and killed a five-year-old girl, reports said. Police said that Wafa Nabil Abu Razit Abu Midan jumped into the street and was accidentally hit by a passing military jeep. She was brought to a hospital but died and was buried shortly afterwards, said a police spokesman. Reports said that news of the death sparked protests in the Bureij camp and that a 20-year-old youth was shot in the leg when troops opened fire on the crowd. Also Friday, two firebombs were thrown in the West Bank town of Ramallah, the army said. Israel Radio reported that the firebombs hit a car transporting ABC and Viasnews television crews, but there was no damage or injuries.

Middle East News

Palestinians draw up ambitious health plan for occupied lands

CAIRO (R) — Palestinians have drawn up a national plan to improve the health of nearly two million people living under Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip at an initial cost of more than \$50 million.

A 157-page document from the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and made available to Reuters Friday painted a grim picture of a population increasingly debilitated by physical and mental ills after two years in revolt against Israeli rule.

The plan outlined an integrated health care network throughout the territories, drawing heavily of financial and technical help from the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other international relief aid organisations.

A massive injection of cash would clearly be needed to make the scheme work effectively.

The report's budget forecast showed that the envisaged primary health care system alone

would cost an estimated \$45 million to equip, staff and run in its first year.

Another 39 million would be needed over five years to implement the proposals for secondary health care.

The document, drawn up by the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and dated March this year, detailed plans for properly equipped hospitals, psychiatric clinics and rehabilitation centres over a 10-year period.

Its stated aim was to provide 41 main primary health care centres, 63 intermediate centres and 88 small clinics with 26 mobile units and 24 ambulances.

The document hinted indirectly at the way in which the plan could

help keep the revolt going by saying it would "encourage the idea that reducing suffering through efficient health care contributes to the building of peace."

One Cairo-based diplomat told Reuters he thought there was a pressing need on the part of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat to bolster support in the territories for his policy of seeking direct peace talks with Israel.

"Medical help is badly needed, but it's also a chance for the Palestine leaders outside to show they're not utterly irrelevant on the streets of Gaza and the West Bank," he said.

Palestinian medical sources said one of the plan's main architects was Fathi Aratat, the nationalist leader's brother and head of the Palestine Red Crescent Hospital in Cairo.

The PRCS document said 50,000 Palestinians had been injured in one way or another in the

two-year-old intifada or uprising against Israel's 22-year-old occupation.

Twenty per cent of the injured were women and a further 20 per cent children, it said, adding that the entire Palestinian family was affected by the struggle between the two sides.

The PRCS, set up by the PLO in 1968 and endorsed by the Palestine National Council (PNC) the following year, said in the document that infant mortality had soared under Israeli occupation.

The incidence of mental diseases was three times higher in the territories than in Israel itself, the report added.

It said total health spending in the territories had fallen from \$235.5 million in 1978 to \$3.98 million in 1984.

The whole expenditure on health in the West Bank is less than one third of that of one Israeli hospital," it said.

Rival Christian forces battle in east Beirut

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Rival Christian forces skirmished with howitzers and mortars north of Beirut Friday amid mounting differences over a settlement to their dispute.

Police said no casualties were reported from the shooting of about 10 rounds per hour across the Christian hinterland of Kesrouan province.

By police count, the first for 800-square-kilometre Christian enclave has killed 762 people and wounded 2,116 since it broke out Jan. 30, pitting army troops of rebel Gen. Michel Aoun against Samir Geagea's militiamen.

Geagea, who leads the Lebanese Forces militia, said in an interview with the conservative daily Al Bayraq that he differed with Aoun on the formation of a political authority to end their dispute.

"We want the authority to deal with the Lebanon crisis, while the general wants it to deal with the (Christian enclave)," Geagea said.

A three-man mediation committee, which called the shaky ceasefire on March 3, has proposed the formation of the political authority to work out a settlement to the conflict between Aoun and Geagea.

Christian sources, close to the mediation committee, said Aoun wanted to head the proposed political authority.

One source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Aoun also wanted the political authority's mission limited to running the day-to-day affairs of the estimated one million Christians who

live in the enclave.

Geagea, according to the source, wanted the authority to negotiate an end to the civil war with opposition leaders.

The source said Geagea wanted the Syrian-backed government of President Elias Hrawi to spread its authority over the enclave, while Aoun strongly objects to this.

On Thursday, Geagea reiterated a cautious welcome for an Arab League-brokered peace plan to end Lebanon's nearly 15-year-old civil war.

Hrawi was elected president on Nov. 24 in line with the peace accord, worked out by Lebanese lawmakers in Taif, Saudi Arabia, last October to ensure a more balanced distribution of power between Muslims and Christians.

"The Taif accord could be a way to a solution that would unite one of the many nooses of the Lebanon crisis," Geagea said Thursday.

Aoun has rejected the Taif accord and refused to recognise Hrawi as head of state.

Aoun, Geagea and Hrawi are Maronites, the Catholic community that has dominated political life in Lebanon since independence from France in 1943.

SLA fighters attack Hezbollah base

Meanwhile a force of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia attacked a base of pro-Iranian Shi'ite Muslim extremists in South Lebanon Thursday, an SLA-run radio station said.

Arabs condemn British media reporting on Iraq

LONDON (AP) — The Arab League's London mission Thursday condemned British news coverage of Iraq in the week a London-based journalist was hanged in Baghdad as a spy.

A statement from the office of the League of Arab States said the Council of Arab Ambassadors in London met Tuesday and condemned what it called "the hostile British media campaign against Iraq which has used its legitimate right to safeguard its security and sovereignty against espionage on its military bases."

Iraq executed Iranian-born journalist Farzad Bazoft on March 15 after a closed trial at which he was convicted of spying for a foreign power when he went to the Al Iskandaria Military Base in September.

The liberal London newspaper the Observer for which he was working said Bazoft was simply to get information for a story about an explosion at the base and was

acting openly and with the knowledge of the Iraqi government. Editor Donald Trelford insists that a confession by Bazoft was extracted under duress.

Newspapers, the government and legislators joined in criticising the execution.

The Arab League statement Thursday said the council was accustomed to hostile media attitudes against Arab countries. But it said the past week's reporting on Iraq "has in fact raised many questions about the implications and aims" of the alleged campaign and the news media's "violent reaction from the outset without looking into facts and seeking the truth."

In reviewing this regrettable attitude, the council registered its solidarity with Iraq and expressed its denunciation of this convulsive attitude of the British media which is incompatible with democratic norms and journalistic fair play," it said.

Turkey on alert for increased Kurdish violence

ANKARA (R) — Turkey is on alert for increased Kurdish separatist violence after the most costly start to any year since fighting erupted in mid-1984.

"This is a critical year for the PKK (Kurdish Workers Party). The year is going to be very active for them," an official Turkish source said Friday.

"They failed in 1989 to achieve their long-stated aim of forming a liberated area in Turkey. Now they feel they have to do something to gain the upper hand."

Turkey believes the Marxist PKK, whose guerrilla campaign has resulted in more than 2,000 deaths, is at least tacitly supported in the latest fighting by its southern neighbours Iraq and Syria.

It is also concerned that the PKK may be forging links with Turkish leftists to help widen operations at present confined to a mountainous southeastern region about half the size of Italy.

A total of 78 rebels, troops and civilians have been reported killed since Jan. 1, compared with only 16 in the first three months of last year.

Some Ankara-based diplomats believe pro-Kurdish sentiment, including university demonstrations, will grow unless the government liberalises some of its policies towards Kurds.

"There is increasing popular resentment," an Asian diplomat said. "Pro-Kurdish demonstrations will expand unless something is done. The government fears events might get out of hand."

Turkey, which has the second biggest armed forces in NATO, does not regard its estimated 10 million Kurds — about one-fifth of the country's population — as a minority.

The PKK claims southeastern Turkey as part of an ancient Kurdish homeland stretching into Iran, Iraq and Syria.

Troops, backed by tanks, im-

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1990

MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEFS

No progress reported in Afghan talks

HELSINKI (AP) — U.S. and Soviet delegations have ended two days of talks on Afghanistan, but made no progress toward a political settlement, the chief U.S. negotiator said. Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly also said the Soviet Union is giving military supplies worth \$300 million a month to the Afghan government. The Soviet delegation was not available to comment on the outcome of the talks. On arriving in Helsinki Tuesday, Soviet delegate Yuri Alekseyev said he brought "a package of new proposals" on Afghanistan to present to the U.S. delegation. Despite the lack of progress, Kelly told reporters the discussions were "useful and constructive." "The Soviet position was announced by Foreign Minister Edward Shevardnadze in February and I cannot comment on the Soviet view," Kelly said. "Difficult and complex questions are involved. We reached no agreements in the talks," he said. Kelly declined to outline the main differences between the two countries.

Joint Yemeni cabinet approves draft laws

ADEN (R) — A joint North and South Yemeni cabinet meeting ended three days of discussions by approving several draft laws for a reunited Yemen due by November, an official announcement said. The draft laws relate to customs, taxes, banks, trade unions, passports, diplomatic representation and foreigners' residence. The announcement said a competition would be held to choose an emblem and a national anthem for the new country. It was agreed that women would have the right to occupy leading government positions depending on their qualifications and experience, it added. A similar meeting — the third of its kind — will be held in May in North Yemen's capital Sanaa where the gathering took place last month.

Israeli soldiers beat Reuter photographer

RAMALLAH, occupied West Bank (R) — Israeli soldiers punched and kicked Reuter photographer Havakuk Levison Thursday after he took pictures of them detaining two Palestinians in a roundup of suspected protesters. The army spokesman, informed of the incident, issued an apology and promised an investigation. Soldiers in charge of the area later ordered the release of the two detained Palestinians, aged 11 and 17, said by residents to have been studying at home. Levison, a 47-year-old Israeli, suffered an injured hip and hand during the attack by about 10 soldiers and civilians, who had been in two mini-buses which were stoned near Ramallah in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. The photographer was rescued by two Israeli policemen and reporters who had been following in another car. The army has sought to restrict coverage of the occupied territories since the start of the 27-month-old Palestinian uprising.

Rajavi calls on U.N. to withdraw report

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq-based Iranian opposition leader Massoud Rajavi called on the U.N. secretary-general to withdraw a report which he said glossed over human rights abuses by the Tehran government. In the report following his visit to Tehran in January, U.N. human rights investigator Reynaldo Galindo Pohl said he was unable to substantiate accusations by Rajavi's Mujahideen Khalq that Iran was systematically executing political dissidents. "I request that your excellency speedily intervene and adopt a stance to erase the detrimental consequences of the report," Rajavi said in a telex to U.N. chief Javier Perez de Cuellar, made available to Reuters in Baghdad. Tehran has agreed to allow Pohl back in later in the year and some political observers in the Middle East considered he toned down criticism of Iran in the report to facilitate his return.

Qadhafi: CIA created and spread AIDS

BEIRUT (R) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi has told a conference on family issues that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) created the disease AIDS under a germ warfare programme. The Libyan News Agency (JANA) said Thursday Qadhafi was speaking at the opening session of the international conference for the Arab and Foreign family, held Wednesday in the town of Benghazi. JANA, monitored in Lebanon, quoted Qadhafi as saying the CIA tested an experimental virus on prisoners. The virus, causing acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), was spread round the world when the prisoners left jail, Qadhafi said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Emergency 630341

Emergency Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 991228

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 865300

Police Security Department 69021

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage

Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information

(directory assistance) 121

Oversize Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone

Reports 623101

Abdul Telephone Repairs 661101

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09) 983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09) 991071

Ibn Sina Hospital (09) 986722

HEJD:

Princess Basma Hospital (02) 275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02) 272275

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:55 Baghdad (IA)

10:45 Cairo (MS)

12:25 Kuwait (SU)

13:40 Tripoli (LN)

16:55 Rome (AZ)

17:30 Dubai, Damascus (EK)

20:40 Park, Damascus (AF)

22:45 London (U)

23:00 Paris (U)

23:15 Tel Aviv (U)

23:45 Nairobi (U)

23:55 Jakarta (U)

24:00 Tokyo (U)

24:15 Sydney (U)

24:30 Seoul (U)

24:45 Hong Kong (U)

24:55 Manila (U)

25:00 Singapore (U)

25:15 Kuala Lumpur (U)

25:30 Jakarta (U)

25:45 Bangkok (U)

25:55 Perth (U)

26:00 Port Moresby (U)

26:15 Port Moresby (U)



Her Majesty Queen Zein, the Queen Mother, Thursday poses with the children of the Mabarrat Um Al Hussein orphanage (Petra photo)

Queen Mother patronises orphanage ceremony

AMMAN (Petra) — A special mother's day ceremony was held at the Al Hussein Youth City in Amman on Thursday to honour Her Majesty Queen Zein, the Queen Mother. The ceremony was organised by the Mabarrat Um Al Hussein (orphanage) and attended by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma and an audience of invited guests who included wives of diplomatic representatives in Jordan.

Badran begins visit to south today



Mudar Badran

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Mudar Badran will embark Saturday on a three-day tour of the southern regions of Jordan that will take him to the governorates of Karak, Tafileh and Maan, severely hit by drought. Accompanied by a number of Cabinet members, the prime minister will first visit Dhiban and Bani Hamideh districts to learn about the local population's needs, and then he will go to Karak for a meeting with the governor, heads of various local organisations and trade unions representing various sectors.

The meetings will be attended by members of the Lower House of Parliament representing the Karak constituency and the neighbouring badiya district.

Badran is also scheduled to meet citizens representing the southern Jordan Valley region and will tour the potash and phosphate plants.

Sunday the prime minister and the accompanying delegation will go to Tafileh Governorate for similar meetings, and Monday he will go to Maan where meetings will be held with local officials and representatives of the government.

Questions related to agriculture and farming will be among the main issues for discussion.

The ministers of agriculture, culture, labour and tourism who are expected to accompany Badran on his tour, Wednesday paved the way for the prime minister's visits by touring a number of regions within the Madaba area including Bani Hamideh and Dhiban where they received requests for improvement of the local residents' general conditions.

Two Jordanian institutions last week announced that they were

Prime minister asks ministries, departments not to exceed allocation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Mudar Badran has issued a 12-point communiqué calling on all ministries, government departments and public institutions to adhere to the 1990 budget law and not to make any payment in excess of the approved allocations.

The communiqué also called on them to fully adhere to all financial circulars and directives organising the dispensing of public funds, and to coordinate with the General Budget Department in programming their current and capital expenses.

The allocations were made by the National Aid Fund and the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company following the publication of a ministerial committee report about the plight of the southern region hit by the drought. The drought was said to have caused shortages in animal feed, high production cost of agricultural products and lower income for local farmers.

On the eve of the prime minister's visit, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, published interviews with the Karak governor and the director of the agricultural cooperation department in Karak. Both officials stressed upon the adverse influence of the drought in the south.

In the interview released by Petra Friday, the Governor Ismail Duheiman said altogether rain fall was estimated at 217 millimetres in Karak, 210 in Rabbeh, 197 in Mazar, 166 in Qaser and 149 in Ghweir during the present rainy season, down by almost half the amount of rain that fell in these regions in 1989.

The shortage of rainfall has adversely affected animal farms as well as agriculture in the southern regions," Duheiman said.

The governor, however, noted that the government had responded quickly providing additional amounts of animal feed to the stockbreeders, drilling artesian wells, opening the state-owned pasture land for livestock and reclaiming lands for cereal production.

draw up plans for cooperation among the four countries.

Among the questions discussed with Abaza was linking the central computer system of the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) with that of the Egyptian Electricity Authority in preparation for the linkage of the national grids, which will be a four-year project ending in 1993.

Abaza said in Cairo Thursday that the linkage would save up to \$100 million for the two countries annually.

The minister also said that his ministry was ready to provide Jordanian technicians with further training in Egypt in power generation and in exploiting renewable energy resources.

A survey at the Aqaba gulf and the Suez Canal zones later this month to pave the ground for the laying of submarine cables as part of the network that would link the two countries' grids," Abaza said.

The linkage will be partly financed by a \$170 million loan from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development. It would be held here in June to

acquire four skills: communication skills, accounting skills, business skills and interpersonal skills."

Gress added that accounting courses at Arab universities contain only one half of the required course work in the field of accounting. Students of accountancy in the Arab World are often taught to memorise instead of analysing and using creative problem-solving skills, Gress said. "The focus in accountancy education should be on developing analytical and conceptual skills versus memorisation. The educational aim should be emphasised on developing lifelong learning skills rather than imitative skills."

Gress suggested that one third of the accounting course taught should include business subjects, such as management and marketing, as well as general knowledge in order for the trainee to have an appreciation of and make a contribution to the cultural values of his/her environment.

The Arab Society for Certified Accountants (ASCA), which has become a full member of the International Federation of Accountants, has set up its own examinations to qualify Arab accountants for entry into the profession. "The future of Arab accounting education will without any doubt depend to a large degree on the type of examination and the qualifications for membership that the society will require of its aspiring members," Gress said.

The conference agreed on holding the third ASCA conference in the second half of November 1993 in Cairo.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

الجوردان تايمز جريدة سياسية عربية مستقلة نادرة

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Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Swift action on corruption is the key

THERE ARE many valid and persuasive reasons to argue that the deliberations of the Lower House of Parliament on the issue of corruption and financial mismanagement in our public institutions should have been conducted in an open session rather than in secret as the House did last week. After all, corruption and questions related to financial mismanagement have been simmering in our midst for many years, and this was one of the major reasons for our economic ills. And as long as this internal conflict continues to remain under wraps, it also has the potential to grow into an uncontrollable monster which would sap the Kingdom's energy and resources.

Judging from the magnitude of the corruption debacle, the lesser of the two evils as far as policy is concerned dictates that surgical treatment of the cancer be immediately carried out. The direct impact of such exposure of this major domestic issue will at least have a cleansing effect on the economic, fiscal, social and political fabrics of our country.

But, having opted for a secret session to study the issue, the swift revelations of the minutes of the session in the press made a mockery of the House's wisdom to go behind closed doors. The first fallout of the affair cast doubts on the integrity of secret parliamentary debates on any issue whether related to public welfare, order, security or anything else.

What exacerbated this deviation from parliamentary norms was probably a growing fear that the country may be on the brink of a policy of witch-hunting bordering on an arbitrary inquisition running wild. Yet what has already been done, along with the rationale behind divulging details of the secret House session on corruption and financial mismanagement, could be attributable to the thirst of the public to expose the real nature of the problem. In actual terms, it might not have been possible to keep the lid of secrecy on the debate for too long even if all members of the House and those who attended the session in other capacities had observed the code of secrecy.

For one thing, the rumour mill in town would have rife with speculation, exploiting the sensitiveness of the subject to the extent that the victims would have been public welfare and individual credibilities.

Given the realities of the situation, the legislative, executive and judicial authorities should now engage in a collective damage control process by speeding up investigations into the cases of corruption and seeking to bring all guilty parties to justice as soon as possible with a view to recovering at least part of any stolen funds.

In light of the urgency of the cases expected to reach the stage of prosecution, there might be no escape from putting into effect special procedures for the purpose. Problems would of course remain, but at least the government will have done its best to hasten the full exposure of the corruption crisis before its fallouts get to be more serious and damaging to all of us.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily mocked a statement by Israel's foreign minister in which he claimed that the PLO was responsible for the killing of Palestinians and the sufferings of 200 Palestinian families who lost some of their members during the ongoing intifada. The paper said that Israel aims to distort the PLO's image and draw a wedge between the Palestinians and their legitimate leadership. The whole world realises that it is Israel which is responsible for the sufferings of the Palestinian people and that Israel had been disregarding all United Nations resolutions and ignoring all appeals from various nations to reach peace with the Arabs and to grant the Palestinians their legitimate rights, the paper noted. It said that the Israeli-planned Jewish immigration into the occupied Arab territories which is designed to uproot the Palestinians and settle the Jews on their land has been condemned by the European Community, the Soviet Union and the former American President Jimmy Carter. These condemnations are sufficient to tell the world the true story about the situation and the conditions of the Arab people under Israeli rule. It said most of all the people of Palestine who are now involved in an uprising to secure their rights and freedom will continue to be vigilant and capable of thwarting Israel's designs.

Abdul Rahim Omar is one of a group of columnists in the local press to warmly welcome the government's decision to set up investigation committee that will embark on probing into the corruption cases before referring the culprits to trial. The writer says that Parliament members in general and the financial committee at the Lower House in particular are to be commended for their brave decision in demanding that the government start investigations. Only through such action can the government retrieve the stolen funds and can put an end to any future abuse of power and authority, the writer notes. By exposing the responsible elements for corruption, the government will be enhancing the ethics and the principles of good conduct among the civil servants and government employees; and at the same time increase confidence in this country and its laws especially among the Jordanian expatriates who are investing in their home country, Omar states. The writer pays tribute to the Central Bank of Jordan for its continued efforts to secure foreign exchange to support the Jordanian currency and expresses appreciation of the media and the press for calling public attention to the chronic problems that require urgent solutions. But, he says, that only through free and fair investigations and trials can justice be accomplished. The writer also proposes that the government offer the embezzlers and those who abused their authority to secure personal gains the chance to return the stolen funds within a limited period of time as a condition for not exposing them to public and sparing them any penalties as required by law.

View from Amman

The EC and the developing world

By Kamel Abu Jaber

I have just returned from an international symposium in Brussels on the subject of "European Community Agricultural Policy and Development Cooperation." The conference was convened by the Friedrich-Naumann Foundation of West Germany to consider the impact of the European Community's agricultural policies on the developing nations.

As the week-long conference proceeded, several aspects of the uneven relationship between the north and the south began to stand out. While the speakers and the delegates from the north spoke in specific terms, those from the south spoke principally in generalities. Those of the north were speaking from a position of strength, willing and able to concentrate on specific questions regarding their agricultural policies in general as well as specific questions dealing with individual trade and commodity items: sugar, coffee, cocoa, bananas, cereals ... etc!

The plethora of problems, domestic and international facing the less developed countries (LDCs), reflected itself in the types of issues the dele-

gates emphasised and wished to discuss over and over again. We of the south wanted to know if the north was sincere in seeking ways of helping us solve our problems: Problems that surely transcend questions of price, trade facilities or barriers. Had that been one aim behind the convention of this conference those who called for it certainly received a strong response.

The problems of the LDCs' woefully lagging behind the north, with the gap increasingly widening, seem with the passage of time to be increasing rather than decreasing. Part of the blame, no doubt lies with us. We have not done our homework, and we continue in our individual countries, and regions, with very few exceptions, to think that if the problem is ignored long enough, it will go away. As history amply explains, in such circumstances, problems not only do not disappear, but continue to grow. We have neither faced up to, nor decided upon any of the major problems facing our societies: population explosion, production rather than consumption, the very orientation, indeed the soul around which we wish

to build our societies, the nature of the political regime we want, democratisation and political participation. All of these and many others continue to be questions basking in mid air, as if in suspended animation, in search of answers.

That the north may be callous to our plight might be true but it is, or seems at times, trying to help but it does not know how. We have not helped because we have not been able thus far to articulate our problems or where or how we need help. But then we are handicapped to begin with. Partly accounting for this condition is our relative newness, our relatively late entry into the modern world. Most of our countries bobbed into modernity in the wake of the World War II with many scars on our body politics, our society, our culture, indeed our very soul. Sometimes we think that all that has happened to us is the trading of old masters for new. Lashing back against our colonial experience, and in our frustrated anger with ourselves and the world at large for the conditions we find ourselves in, we have missed many

opportunities. Not have we been blessed with steady forward looking leadership to help us in bridging the gap between traditionalism and modernity. All, or most of our regimes, are new creations grafted upon basically fragmented, even atomised societies with one foot firmly planted in traditionalism, and the other very tentatively attempting to tiptoe into modernity. Few of our regimes had any precedents, even written records to rely upon.

How can we compete with the world of the north? How can we negotiate? Indeed how can we communicate? While the north is already in the twenty first century, we are still groping with medievalism.

We need help. We need it badly. We have already lost in terms of industry and technology. Whatever brains we have either immigrate to the north or are so alienated at home that they have stopped functioning properly. And now in considering the specific problem of the agricultural policies of the EEC, it is already evident that here too, even here, in agriculture where vast majorities of our people make a

living, we are also losing. Can we escape this terrible marginalisation of our lives? How? Do we have a future? What are its broad outlines? Most of our regimes, are new creations grafted upon basically fragmented, even atomised

gains and losses. Our problems are global and need to be restructured our economies. The north needs to restructure its values. It is not charity but mutuality of interest that should govern the equation. The quality of life they are seeking depends on our life, even our subsistence. The north sets the rules from its own logic and vantage point. It seems there is need for a change of attitude that goes beyond the mere accounting of gains and losses.

Our problems are global and in need of global not piecemeal answers. And while we need to restructure our economies, the north needs to restructure its values. It is not charity but mutuality of interest that should govern the equation. The quality of life they are seeking depends on our life, even our subsistence. The north sets the rules from its own logic and vantage point. It seems there is need for a change of attitude that goes beyond the mere accounting of gains and losses.

Globalism and class struggle

By Silvia Brucan

Professor Silvia Brucan, the political and diplomat, is well known in and outside Romania primarily as the man who challenged the Ceausescu regime years ago. In defiance of ruthless persecution, he carried on his uncompromising struggle for his country's freedom, for human dignity.

THE USSR makes full use of its great power status, playing a major role in world affairs and in the solution of international problems on all continents. China is equally acting as a great power, though its role and influence in world affairs is limited by its reduced economic and military potential. A number of socialist states that are less developed (e.g., China, Cuba, Vietnam, even Romania) have joined the Group of 77 developing nations struggling for a new international economic order, while Yugoslavia is one of the founders of the Non Aligned Movement.

Lenin warned that revolution in Russia or in less developed countries would not be enough; only revolution "at least in several advanced countries" could make socialism "capable of exercising a decisive influence upon world politics as a whole." However, the capitalist core in the West has survived the revolutionary sweeps in the wake of World War I and II, and is alive and kicking. Neither the formulation of foreign policy, nor the external behaviour of a socialist state originate in its domestic system alone. The international environment with its competitive dynamics and power game, play an important part in shaping foreign policy. We must reject the cosmopolitan verbiage about "the new type of relations" supposedly prevailing between socialist states that remind us of the early religious style of socialist egalitarianism.

Stalin's second theory that the world market is split into two world markets, one capitalist and the other socialist, has proven equally erroneous. Witness the effects on the Soviet economy and foreign trade balance of oil price fluctuations on the world market. As for Poland and Romania, Hungary and Yugoslavia, they have all been compelled to adopt belt-tightening measures to cope with the high interest rates set by Western banks and affecting foreign creditors.

In short, the world economy is a hierarchical system in which Western capitalism still enjoys a strong position that allows it to set the rules of the game on the world market, for better or for worse. Crises and recessions that cyclically beset the capitalist economy affect also socialist economies.

At the heart of Stalin's theoretical conception lies the postulate that the class struggle constitutes the decisive motive force not only in society, but also in international politics. On that basis, we are treated to a dichotomous image of a world made up of two rival camps, capitalism and socialism. There are, to be sure, theorists who still cling to such a reduction-

The day the rabbi toppled the government

By Dan Petreanu
The Associated Press

TEL AVIV — The man who may decide who will head Israel's new government is an unlikely king-maker, a 69-year-old rabbi better known for Torah scholarship than foreign policy.

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, spiritual leader of the ultra-orthodox Shas party, already made his power felt when he put aside his daily task of guiding his flock and advised Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to accept U.S.-backed peace proposals.

Shamir said no, and Yosef then used his spiritual authority to topple Shamir's government by withholding the parliamentary votes of his Shas last Thursday. Yosef's views angered his mostly right-wing followers — many of whom back Shamir's Likud party — and a few ran into his Jerusalem synagogue shouting "traitor."

Finally, let us deal with globalism. At the time when Marx wrote Das Kapital, his global social system was national society, and it was in this context that he viewed the contradiction in the mode of production, the relation between base and superstructure, the class struggle, whereby the proletariat, to acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself the nation. Although Marx foresaw the gradual internationalisation of productive forces and human activities, his writings nevertheless reflect a historical age in which the European nation-states functioned as self-contained social systems, whose dynamics were basically and chiefly internal. External relations were secondary or even tertiary types of social relations.

Today we are dealing with a world system, global in scope, in which information is ubiquitous and instantaneous, communication universal, transportation supersonic, and modern weaponry planetary both in delivery and destructive capability. The scientific-technological revolution has virtually changed the whole international environment and the relations between internal and external factors of politics. It is Mikhail Gorbachev's merit to have formulated the basic thesis: "The contemporary world for all profound contradictions and for all the radical differences among the countries that comprise it, is interrelated, interdependent and integral." To substantiate it, he mentioned the internationalisation of the world's economic ties, the comprehensive scope of the scientific-technological revolution, the issue of Earth's resources, the common environmental danger, and the crying social problems of the developing world which affect all of us. The main thing, however, is human survival, threatened by the tremendous development of nuclear weapons. This theoretical conclusion opens up a new vista. This is not to say that the nation-state has ceased to be the chief actor on the international scene or that the contradiction between the two socio-economic systems, capitalism and socialism, no longer operates in international politics. They certainly continue to exist and to operate in world affairs, but their dynamics must now be integrated within a world system becoming more and more global — New Times, Moscow.

support such a government," said Yosef, dressed in traditional dark robes with gold embroidery and incongruous sunglasses that protect his light-sensitive eyes.

He called Shamir's government "the extremist of extremes" and argued "it would not have been able to give a positive reply" to

the U.S. plan for the first dialogue ever between Israelis and Palestinians.

"What would the nations of the world say then? These Israelis don't want peace, they want war," Yosef said. "And afterwards, when, God forbid, all the Arab states will rise up and make

war against us... how many will be killed? Who will account for the spilled blood?"

Yosef is a former Israeli chief rabbi of Sephardic Jews, those of Middle East or North African origin who now constitute a majority in Israel.

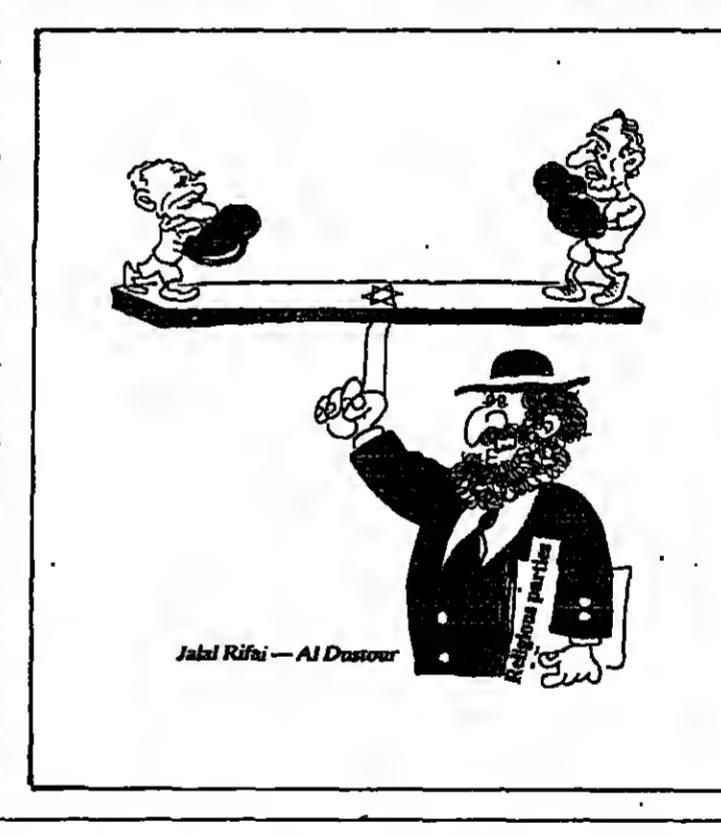
Born in Baghdad, he served as deputy chief rabbi of Egypt before moving to Israel. Here he was a religious court judge, author of Torah studies and founder in 1984 of the Shas party, an acronym for the Sephardic Torah guardians.

He created the party in reaction to discrimination against religious Sephardic Jews by the ultra-orthodox religious establishment, which was dominated by Ashkenazis, or European Jews.

Shas quickly gained support among secular Sephardis as well and today, at six seats, is the third largest party in the 120-seat Knesset. Three other religious parties control 12 seats.

Sephardic Jews, who comprise roughly 55 per cent of Israel's Jewish population, generally are poorer and more conservative than Ashkenazi Jews. Their massive support enabled the Likud to end 29 years of rule by the centrist Labour party in 1977.

But since the 27-month-old Palestinian uprising, has made peace a more urgent concern, Yosef and some other Sephardic leaders have surprised their flock with moderate statements.



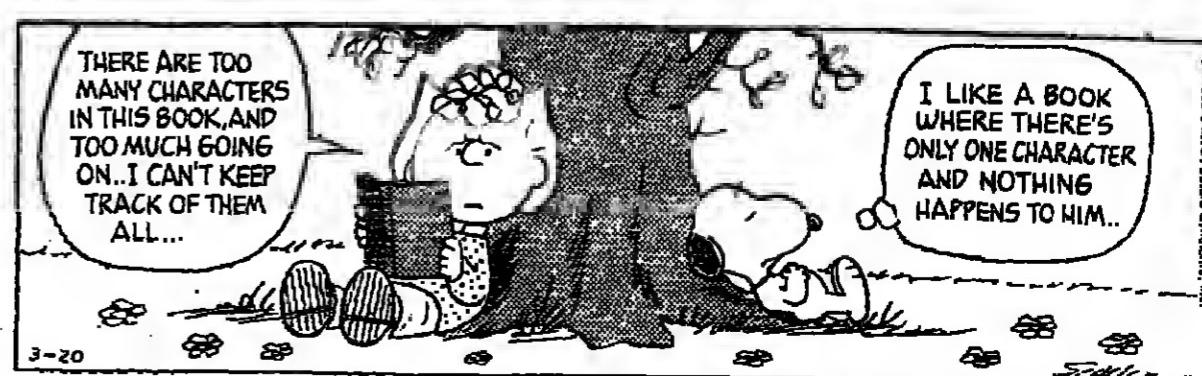
Mutt'n Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



Electorate sees House's vote on corruption cases as sign of a parliamentary process gaining momentum

Giving credit where it is due

The decision of the Lower House of Parliament to forward nine cases of corruption for investigation and possible prosecution was not only the natural course of events but also served as an opportunity for the members of the House to vindicate themselves to an extent from harsh criticism for over their performance on the floor. **P.V. Vivekanand** reports:

AMMAN — In the wake of last week's decision by the Lower House of Parliament to refer nine cases of possible corruption to the judicial authorities and seek more details on dozens of others, some of the main questions that are raised among the voters are: Are the deputies finally doing the job expected of them? Was it the right way to approach the issue? How serious are the people's representatives in pursuing the issue of corruption and financial mismanagement? Is there a ceiling to what the deputies can achieve?

Having secured the mandate of the people in the Nov. 8 elections, the deputies have been finding themselves at the receiving end of harsh criticism from all corners for "not being able to achieve anything solid for the people," for "focusing attention on marginal issues" and for "overlooking the promises they made to their constituencies." Hard-hitting words have appeared in the press and also came in some Friday sermons at mosques as well as a few underground leaflets (*mashru'at*). Against this background, many observers and voters see the House's move last week to expose possible cases of corruption in official circles and initiate the process of bringing the guilty to justice as a long-awaited attempt by the deputies to exonerate themselves, particularly by bringing out an issue which is seen by many as a major contributor to the Kingdom's present economic ills."

Abdullah Hussein, a service taxi driver, agrees with this line of thinking and believes the deputies deserve praise, but finds fault with the way the House handled the entire affair. "They should not have decided to discuss the issue in a closed session," he said. "Why did we vote them in? To have their own secrets and possible deals, and continue to keep us in the dark until such time they feel we are mature enough to understand?"

"Everyone knows that someone, somewhere had always embezzled a lot of money in major projects this country has seen in the past two decades," commented Ali Mahmoud, a downtown grocer. "This was always assumed

and of course if, legal proceedings are launched to punish the guilty?"

'Goal is served'

Dr. Mahmoud Mazen believes that the House was right in opting for a closed session on corruption. "After all, what do we want? To ensure that the guilty are punished, isn't it? That ultimate goal is being served now, without the deputies having to go through the process of 'throwing mud' at some people who might be guilty only of being at the wrong place at the wrong time. Our country is small, and situations are more than likely to damage anyone."

"Let the authorities investigate," he added. "I believe that I have a right to know who was responsible for forcing me to work 16 hours a day to make my ends meet. I used to work for 10 or 12 hours a day and take a decent income home,

open to the public. "We are a democracy and democracy should be practised in full," he said. "Why the guess work, if the deputies will eventually speak and the information will be spread until it becomes rumours? Whom will it serve?"

Abu Hussein, an unsuccessful candidate in the Nov. 8 elections, however, expressed satisfaction over the work of the House's Financial Committee, whose report was the key document which was studied by the House in its secret session last week.

"The deputies have done their job," he added. "They have started a process, and it is up to the judiciary and executive authorities to follow it up and ensure that justice is carried out."

'Democracy in full'

Dr. Khalil Abu Hussein from Zarqa insisted that all investigations and related sessions of Parliament should be open to the public. "We are a democracy and democracy should be practised in full," he said. "Why the guess work, if the deputies will eventually speak and the information will be spread until it becomes rumours? Whom will it serve?"

"The deputies have done their job," he added. "They have started a process, and it is up to the judiciary and executive authorities to follow it up and ensure that justice is carried out."

"For all we know, the testimony of a security guard at a certain project site can be the key to some mysteries related to that project, and help determine who was responsible for what," he added. However, he conceded that he was not underestimating the efficiency of the deputies to separate the grain from the chaff."

Some people interviewed by the Jordan Times felt that corruption trials should be held in public.



CONSULTATIONS IN THE CORRIDORS... Members of the Lower House of Parliament, despite their ideological and political differences, appear to be united in reasserting their clout and proving to their constituents that they are indeed the legislative

authority through bringing out the thorny but sensitive issue of corruption in public institutions and referring nine cases to the judiciary for investigation and possible prosecution (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

immediate access to Parliament proceedings, secret or otherwise, even before the deputies leave the Parliament building."

But are the deputies doing their job in the right way? "Well, I guess so," answered Maia Zweidan, an office secretary. "The changing times in our society and life are in fact the mostly widely discussed subject among my group of friends. The obvious conclusion we come up with is that the deputies have limitations simply because they do not have the power to accelerate the executive bureaucracy. They can only make strong recommendations and suggestions, but they are helpless when faced with red tape. So, what they did, in terms of focusing on corruption and raising cases, is very commendable."

The course of events from this point is "no longer the responsibility of the House," argues Jamal Abu Jarra, a leftist political activist. "What (the deputies) have done is to expose possible corruption and leave it to the judiciary to launch legal proceedings wherever needed. But if the judiciary fails them, they could not be blamed."

Leading columnist Tareq Masarweh appeared to echo the same sentiment. Writing in the *Al Ra'i* newspaper, the only Arabic-language daily to publish some details of what went behind the closed doors of the House Tuesday, Masarweh paid tribute to the deputies and the Financial Committee of the House for their "courageous attack on those who thrive on corruption."

The House's move to refer nine cases of corruption to the prosecutor general, he said, comes in line with the "effective participation of Parliament in maintaining an untarnished political life in the country."

"The corrupt should pay the price," he wrote. "We should introduce laws that deal with economic crimes. They should be tough against all elements who find their way into government through middlemen. Public servants who thrived on corruption in the absence of control should be questioned."



A POINT OF ORDER... Members of Parliament have been finding themselves the target of harsh criticism from the electorate for "focusing their attention on marginal issues" and "overlooking the promises" to their voters. But last week's move by the House to expose corruption has helped them, to an extent, vindicate themselves (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Discord

(Continued from page 1)

On economic justifications for the government's position rejecting more tax exemptions, Jardebeh said that income tax in Jordan remained low compared to other countries in the region and low compared to income from customs duties.

He added that the Kingdom's budget deficit, which he said would be widened by the exemptions, "is the basis of economic imbalances and is linked to imbalances in the balance of payments."

The minister stressed that "eradicating this deficit has an extreme priority because it is the cornerstone for improving the basics of the Jordanian economy, creating a proper investment climate, boosting exports and returning capital into the country."

Jardebeh's report drew mixed reactions from deputies and a conclusive vote could not be taken on any of the proposed amendments.

The House then voted in favour of reducing tax exemptions for university students from JD 1,500 to JD 1,000 as a compromise between the government and the committee.

The eight-hour session came to an end after deputies discovered there was no quorum to keep the session in progress. The House decided to resume discussions of the income tax law Monday.

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Lithuania pleads for support; says Kremlin planning to use force

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Lithuania's new pro-independence parliament appealed for world support Friday and accused the Kremlin of planning force against its drive to secede from the Soviet Union.

An official statement, befitting a war of words between Moscow and Vilnius, expressed fears that Soviet leaders were "preparing to use force against the Lithuanian Republic and its citizens."

At the same time in Washington, the U.S. Senate unanimously backed Lithuanian independence and democracy — a day after rejecting a stronger message of support at the urging of President George Bush's advisers.

In Tokyo, the head of the official Soviet News Agency (TASS) said the loss of Lithuania would be as grave a blow to the Soviet Union as the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, but pledged that Moscow would not use arms to resolve the crisis.

The Baltic republic urged other countries to lodge protests to prevent the "possible use of any form of coercion and violence against a peaceful member state in the world community, Lithuania, and its citizens."

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has ordered Lithuanians to surrender their weapons and imposed other restrictions on the Baltic republic, which declared its independence on March 11.

Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis has dismissed Gor-

bachev's emergency decrees as "deplorable" and warned they could be "implemented only by brutal armed force."

The plea for international support was made by Landsbergis at the end of a parliamentary session and renewed in a statement released Friday by the republic's information office.

It followed Gorbachev's demand that the Lithuanians halt the formation of volunteer units to defend the republic.

In a further move, TASS reported that KGB security troops had reinforced border troops Thursday on Lithuania's international frontier.

Gorbachev, in his first substantial use of new powers as executive president granted him this month, called on Lithuanians to surrender firearms and imposed tougher visa restrictions and border controls.

Members of Lithuania's new pro-independence leadership rejected Gorbachev's decree as the latest stage in a Kremlin campaign aimed at forcing them back into the Soviet fold.

Gorbachev has pressed Lithuania to rescind a declaration by the newly-elected parliament of a return to its pre-war independence, ended after the Red Army's arrival in 1940.

There was little sign of reconciliation between the two sides Friday as the Lithuanian parliament prepared to elect a new government certain to press on with breakaway moves.

Radical economist Kazimiera Prunskiene has already been appointed prime minister and Algirdas Brazauskas, leader of the republic's Communist Party and a former president, one of her deputies.

In a further sign of Lithuanian defiance, Jonas Vyshniavskas, head of a hunting and fishing federation, said on television that his 10,000 members would not comply with a Gorbachev decree not to turn in weapons.

U.S. Senate backs Lithuania

Meanwhile, Bush is steering away from strong statements on the volatile situation in Lithuania, but the Senate has warned Moscow that using military force in the breakaway republic would harm U.S.-Soviet relations.

The Soviet Union has no right to use force against Lithuania peacefully exercising their democratic rights," declared the resolution, which is not binding but indicates "a sense of Congress."

Gorbachev and other Soviet leaders "should clearly understand that the use of force against the Lithuanian people would have severe repercussions for U.S.-Soviet relations," it said.

Among other measures, she said more pilots than usual were on call.

The Bush administration has expressed concern about Soviet moves in Lithuania, which declared independence from Moscow on March 11 after voting the ruling Communists out of power.

But the United States has not extended formal diplomatic recognition, saying Lithuania does not control its territory.

Earlier Thursday, Bush declined to criticise Gorbachev's order for Lithuanian secessionists to surrender their weapons.

"What good would come from the president of the United States, standing halfway around the world, speculating on something that he doesn't want to see," Bush said.

He spoke as Soviet armoured personnel carriers moved through the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius in a show of force Thursday and leaders of the rebellious Baltic republic appealed for world support.

Sweden on alert

In a separate development, Sweden has put its military on a higher alert after reports of Soviet troop movements in Lithuania, defence officials said Thursday.

"There have been changes in the frame of our basic alert," which marginally increase the state of preparedness, said defence spokeswoman Kari Hansson.

Among other measures, she said more pilots than usual were on call.

Baker tours Soweto

SOWETO, South Africa (R) —

Four days after arriving in Africa, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker finally caught a glimpse Friday of the continent's harsh realities in brief tour of a squatter settlement.

Baker saw the open sewers, the corrugated iron shacks and rusty outdoor latrines in the shanty town of Mshenguville from the window of his limousine as his motorcade sped through the massive black township of Soweto near Johannesburg.

The secretary of state had come to South Africa intent on encouraging the white government to move faster to dismantle the apartheid system.

After meeting President F.W. de Klerk in Cape Town Thursday, Baker said he was convinced the government was committed to abolishing apartheid, under which the black majority of South Africa has been deprived of civil and political rights for decades. U.S. officials and Washington should be diplomatically isolated and would engage its leaders at the highest level.

In Soweto, Baker met Walter Sisulu, a close confidant of black nationalist leader Nelson Mandela.

Baker said after the meeting he was more than ever convinced apartheid had to go.

Asked how he had reacted to the poverty in Soweto, Baker said: "I think it's quite distressing. I think it's important that the system be abolished as quickly as possible."

The 78-year-old Sisulu, who spent 25 years in jail until his release last year, is now in charge of organising the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa.

"We have particularly mentioned to the secretary... lack of facilities for proper education, which we consider can be very harmful," he said.

"We have also mentioned... the lack of accommodation which is also dynamite for violence," Sisulu added.

Over two million people live in Soweto but by far the worst conditions are in its growing squatter camps like Mshenguville which have virtually no utilities or drainage. Rows of mobile toilets inscribed "easy loo toilet hire" line the garbage-strewn dust tracks between shack dwellings.

Sisulu said de Klerk was edging in the right direction but should move faster to destroy apartheid.

Opposite the Sisulu home where the meeting took place, three and four-year-old children in a pre-school centre shook clenched fists in the air and shouted "power, power" and "ANC, ANC."

Bush's budget, he said, is based on a 1988 threat and a 1988

Thatcher party suffers crushing by-election defeat

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservatives suffered a crushing defeat Friday in a key parliamentary by-election and the victorious opposition Labour Party predicted it would go on to win the next general election.

Triumphant Labour candidate Sylvia Heald said: "The historic message that will go from this by-election across the Western World will be that the dark age of Thatcherism is drawing to a close."

She told a crowd chanting "Maggie, out" that a 21 per cent swing from Conservative to Labour in the central England seat of Mid-Staffordshire meant people were turning to a reborn Labour Party.

Conservative spokesmen dismissed Labour's victory, its best at a by-election in more than half a century, as a protest

Mugabe: Reforms in East are not victory for West

ZIMBABWE (R) — Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe has told Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze that reforms ending old-style Communist rule in Eastern Europe did not mean the West had defeated the East.

"At the moment the West feels that they have been victims over the East and people like (British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher) say so quite loudly. But we have refused to accept that this period of review and revision is necessarily a victory for the West," Mugabe said.

His remarks, reported by the Zimbabwe News Agency ZINA, were made at a breakfast meeting with Shevardnadze in the central town of Kadoma, 120 kilometres from the capital Harare.

The Soviet foreign minister, on arrival in Harare, told a news conference that Namibia's independence raised prospects of peace in Angola and Mozambique, torn by civil war.

He leaves Saturday for Tanzania and Nigeria.

Nunn sees major gap in \$307b defence budget

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush's \$307-billion Defence budget contains several major gaps in assessing the overall threat to the West and shaping military strategy, says the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

But Defence Secretary Dick Cheney urged critics Thursday to examine what the Defence Department is doing to restructure U.S. forces, contending that his agency had done a "complete rethinking of missions and strategy."

The defence secretary said he has told the military to take into account the assumptions that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev will be "at least partially successful" in domestic reforms.

In addition, he said, planners should assume that the superpowers will implement successful arms control agreements in conventional and strategic forces; that all Soviet forces have withdrawn from Eastern Europe and that democratically elected, non-Communist governments are in their place.

While such assumptions are "a rosy scenario," Cheney said, he has used them to design the defence budget from now through 1997, and to help the armed services chiefs plan for the mid-1990s.

Essentially, the administration took the level of spending and programme for fiscal year 1991 that was developed back in 1988 and reduced it for fiscal reasons," Nunn said. "They have not adjusted the underlying assumptions about threat and strategy."

But in a speech to the National Press Club, Cheney accused lawmakers of offering "complaints instead of solutions."

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Documents show Soviets not Nazis massacred Poles in Katyn forest

MOSCOW (AP) — Wartime archives held secret for decades reveal evidence that Soviet secret police and not Nazi invaders murdered thousands of Polish officers in a western Russian pine forest, a newspaper says.

The weekly Moscow News, in its March 25 edition, shed light from official records on the Katyn forest massacre, one of the last grisly deeds of the Stalin era to be touched by President Mikhail Gorbachev's news openness.

Moscow news published a two-page spread refuting claims that it was Nazi invaders who mowed down the cream of the Polish intelligentsia held prisoner just south of the western Russian city Smolensk. Other articles have called for the truth about Katyn, but none went so far to document the Soviet role in what has become the most painful World War II wound for Poles.

Katyn has remained a source of lingering Polish mistrust of the Soviet Union. A joint Polish-Soviet Commission has investigated the massacre, but never made a final conclusion.

The Moscow News article concluded the Polish officers were killed in the spring of 1940, well before the Nazis invaded the area, and not in 1941 as the Soviet version long has claimed.

"Familiarity with the whole set of documents allow one to come to the conclusion that the Polish officers and police were shot in April and May by units of the NKVD," the article, based on research by historian Natalia Lebedeva, said. The NKVD was a precursor of today's KGB security police.

Lebedeva said older archive workers told her the NKVD had tried to take over the files related to the Katyn incident in the 1940s but failed. She acknowledged that in the files she found the name Katyn was mentioned only once, but said the routes to the

points where mass graves have been found were clearly laid out.

Polish Premier Tadeusz Mazowiecki has said that in order for there to be true friendship between Poland and the Soviet Union, the full story on the Katyn massacre must be told.

A monument at the site of the mass grave in Katyn attests to the traditional Soviet version of the massacre, paying tribute to the "victims of Fascism — Polish officers shot by the Nazis in 1941."

The Nazis discovered the graves in 1943 and immediately blamed the Soviet Union, but the Soviets said the Nazis had murdered the men in 1941, during the German army's march on Moscow.

She said it appeared the space in the camps had been needed to hold thousands of people who would be deported from the three Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia after the Red Army moved in.

The Soviet Union absorbed the Baltic republics, located to the northwest of Katyn in 1940 under a secret agreement with Germany that divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence.

Lists published in Moscow News implicated dozens of Soviet secret police, army and government officials in the massacre, including Stalin and Lavrenti Beria, who headed the NKVD.

The article said Stalin appeared to have held a special grudge against the Polish officers because "his vanity was hurt" by Soviet troops' defeat at their hands two decades earlier.

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